

学校编码: 10384

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UDC_____

廈門大學

硕士学位论文

Evaluation of Professional Interpreting Competence in Interpreting Accreditation Testing for Interpreters

论口译职业资格证书对口译职业资格能力的评估

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论文提交日期: 2010 年 月

论文答辩时间: 2010 年 月

学位授予日期: 2010 年 月

答辩委员会主席: _____

评 阅 人: _____

2010 年 5 月

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Abstract

Although interpreting is reputedly the second oldest profession in the world, modern conference interpreting is a 20th century phenomenon. Conference interpreting became a profession in the West, essentially in Europe and the USA, in between the two world wars. At that time, there were highly educated civilians or military officers who had considerable exposure to foreign languages in their youth, and who performed consecutive interpretations in full view of conference delegates and were much admired (Mackintosh, 2006:2-3). Social recognition of these personalities and their relatively high level of remuneration provided a good basis for the establishment of the conference interpreting profession as small and elite with correspondingly high performance and ethical standards. In China, interpreting as a profession had a late start compared with that in the West. Around the turn of the 21st century, a number of interpreting accreditation tests emerged in China, such as China Aptitude Test for Translators and Interpreters (CATTI), Shanghai Interpreting Accreditation (SIA), and English Interpreting Certificate (EIC) of Xiamen University, and National Accreditation Test (NAETI). Since interpreting is a language-based activity, the four tests particularly concentrate on language competence, bilingual interpreting skill, and interpreting ability. However, the intrinsic testing system cannot meet the demands of the trend of the professionalism, and a certified interpreter should possess much more than just language competence to become a professional. This thesis proposes a new concept of ‘professional interpreting competence’ based on Bachman’s communicative language competence and other domestic studies. To demonstrate and investigate if this new model is reasonable, well-grounded, and acceptable to society, literature review and surveys were performed. The feasibility of the test was analyzed to illustrate the significance of the accreditation test in evaluating the professional interpreting competence of candidates. Suggestions for the test design were also presented. In general, this thesis analyzed the problems that may arise with the new test and then proposed possible solutions.

The first chapter is an introduction to the overall purpose and structure of this thesis. The framework of the paper is also shown.

The second chapter demonstrates the significance and purpose of the interpreting accreditation test. It expounds on the definition and purpose of a qualification certificate, and the definition, categories, and purpose of qualification tests to bring the interpreting qualification certificate. The relationship of qualification tests with the interpreting profession is analyzed, since the accreditation test serves as the gateway to the industry and is intended to assess candidates' comprehensive professional competence.

The third chapter introduces four accreditation systems in China: CATTI, NAETI, SIA, and EIC. Table analysis reveals the existing problem in all four tests: as accreditation tests, they only focus on testing candidates' language competence rather than their professional competence, thus decreasing the candidates' authority and value.

The fourth chapter analyses and summarizes the concept of 'professional interpreting competence'. In the author's view, this concept can be divided into verbal competence and nonverbal competence. In verbal competence, based on Bachman's communicative language competence theory, professional interpreting competence should primarily include communicative language competence because interpreting is mainly a communicative character. This includes language competence, strategic competence, and psychological-physiological mechanisms (Bachman & Palmer, 1996:34). In addition, intercultural communication ability is emphasized in this part. Nonverbal competence includes the interpreters' mood and mental status, and psychological quality, body language, paralanguage, coping ability, ability to prepare for interpreting, and professional ethics. The definition of each item, and the reason and necessity of including it in professional competence are set forth specifically. The fifth chapter presents the survey investigation. Two questionnaires targeting the social acceptance of professional interpreting competence by interpreters and the audience are shown. In survey one, nine interpreters who have gained CATTI, NAETI, EIC and SIA certificates were investigated through questionnaires and short

interviews, which revealed that interpreters are in favour of including a professional competence test in the accreditation tests. In survey two, 118 valid copies of questionnaires were answered by the audience that participated in the Datamax-O'Neil 2010 Greater China Partnership Conference. Results reveal that most interpreters and audiences insist on highlighting professional interpreting competence rather than language competence in the certificate accreditation system because they believe that more than language competence is required to become a professional interpreter. Psychological quality, coping ability, preparation ability, professional ethics, and other qualities should also be taken into account.

The sixth chapter discusses the significance and feasibility of adding the professional interpreting competence test in the accreditation testing system. A concrete testing method is introduced for each testing item. With respect to professional quality and ethics, experiences of NATTI are recommended for drawing upon.

The seventh chapter concludes the contents of this thesis, with emphasis on the importance and significance of interpreting accreditation tests for the evaluation of professional interpreting competence.

Key words: interpreting accreditation test; professional interpreting competence; Bachman's communicative language competence; language competence; professional interpreter

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摘要

虽然口译被称为世界上第二古老的职业,但是会议口译直到 20 世纪才出现。会议口译起源于西方。两次世界大战之间,其在欧洲和美国成为一项职业。当时的译员都是受过高等教育的公民,或是一些在幼时就频繁接触外语的军队官员。他们在众多代表面前担任交替传译工作,受到了人们的尊重和赞许。社会对这些个体的认可和他们相对较高的薪酬为会议口译职业奠定了良好的基础。这项职业要求具有良好职业道德规范的杰出人才。较西方相比,中国的口译职业起步较晚。几乎直到 21 世纪初,一系列口译职业资格考试才出台,比如全国翻译资格证书,全国外语翻译资格证书,上海外语口译资格证书,厦门大学口译资格证书等。口译对语言的高要求,使得这些证书考试都侧重于对语言能力的测试,特别是双语互译能力和技巧等。然而,随着口译的职业化发展,除了语言能力之外,一个合格的职业译员应当具备更多能力。而原有的测试系统似乎不能跟随口译职业化发展的趋势。在 Bachman 交际语言能力理论和国内其他学者的研究基础上,作者提出了一个全新的概念:口译职业资格能力。作者通过文献回顾和问卷调查来一一阐述其合理性,根据性,社会接受度等。为了解释口译职业资格证书对口译职业资格能力评估的意义,文章分析了将口译职业资格能力设计到证书考试中的可行性,并提出建议。概括来说,文章的结构是发现问题和寻找解决方法的过程。

第一章概述了本论文的目的和结构,介绍了作者的思路过程。在这一章中,读者可以了解作者是如何安排本论文以及这种安排的目的和原因。

第二章主要探讨了口译职业资格考试的意义和目的。首先,作者介绍了职业资格证书的意义和目的及职业资格能力的定义,分类和目的,从而将口译职业资格证书及其与口译职业的关系提上章程,指出口译职业资格证书作为口译行业准入应当测试被试者的综合职业能力。

第三章介绍了中国现行的四套证书体系,即:全国翻译资格证书,全国外语翻译资格证书,上海外语口译证书及厦门大学口译资格证书。作者讨论了这些证书考试的内容,测试形式和评估方法,并将其列为表格。通过表格分析,读者可

以很清楚的发现现行证书所存在的问题：作为职业资格认证，这些证书都仅仅侧重于测试被试者的语言能力而不是他们的职业资格能力。这使得这些证书的权威性和含金量都有所降低和削弱。

第四章分析并总结了作者提出的“口译职业资格能力”的概念。在作者看来，口译职业资格能力可以分为语言能力和非语言能力两部分。在语言能力部分，基于 Bachman 交际语言能力理论，作者认为，由于口译的交际性特点，口译职业资格能力应该首先包括交际语言能力。根据 Bachman 的理论，交际语言能力由三部分组成，即：语言能力，策略能力和心理生理生成机制。另外，作者强调了跨文化交际能力的重要性。在非语言能力部分，译员的情绪和精神状态，体态语，副语言，应对能力，译前准备能力，职业素养与道德都被涉及到。作者详细陈述了每一项能力的定义和将其列入职业资格能力的原因和必要性。

第五章是调查研究。作者设计了两种针对译员和听众的问卷来调查口译职业资格能力的社会接受度。在调查一中，九位获得国内口译职业资格证书认证的译员成为调查对象。作者通过发放问卷和小采访的方式实施调查。调查的结果通过表格来揭示。从采访来看，多数译员认为获得证书后并没有信心去做好实际口译工作，并确实在工作中遇到了种种问题。从问卷表格来看，他们承认表格中所列出的各项职业资格能力，除了语言能力外，其他均很少或没有被测试到。多数译员拥护将职业资格能力的测试纳入口译证书测试系统中。在调查二中，作者从参与 Datamax-O'Neil 2010 大中华区合作伙伴会议的听众中收回了 118 份有效问卷。调查的结果也由表格统计并展示。其结果也正如作者的预期。作者在每个表格下都对表格所展示的结果做了详细分析。

第六章讨论了将口译职业资格能力纳入证书测试体系的意义和可行性。作者介绍了测试每一项能力的具体方法。在职业素养和道德方面，作者建议借鉴澳大利亚国家翻译证书的经验。同时列出相关考题样本，予以参考。

第七章是结论，强调了口译职业资格证书考试对口译职业资格能力评估的意义和重要性。

关键词：口译职业资格考试证书 口译职业资格能力 Bachman 交际语言能力 语言能力 职业译员

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